Child dental health: Don’t skip brushing — or checkups

Regular dental visits are important for people of all ages. Plaque forms from food and causes dental decay (cavities). Arizona children, on average, have five teeth affected by cavities. That’s about 1 out of every 4 teeth in a child’s mouth. Brushing and flossing doesn’t get rid of all of the plaque that causes cavities.

That is why it is important to have the child’s dentist clean their teeth. A teeth cleaning will remove what’s left behind. Routine dental services are covered for Mercy Care DCS CHP members.

The dentist can also catch problems early, when they’re easier to treat. For example, cavities are easier to fill when they’re small. And gum disease can be reversed if caught early.

When to see the dentist
All Mercy Care DCS CHP members must have a full well visit and a dental visit within the first 30 days of removal and placement in out-of-home care. Follow the dentist’s lead on how often to take the child. Here’s what experts usually recommend:

Babies. Take babies to the dentist after the first tooth sprouts. The American Dental Association says babies should see a dentist before turning one.

Children. All children and youth should see the dentist every six months.

During the visit
Tell the dentist if the child’s health has changed. Medical conditions may affect the child’s teeth, especially if the child has:
• Tooth sensitivity
• Puffy or bleeding gums
• Persistent bad breath
• Pain or swelling in the mouth
• Dry mouth
• Diabetes, heart disease, an eating disorder or HIV
• A family history of tooth decay or gum disease


www.MercyCareAZ.org
MC-DCS-CHP-1426
Breastfeeding protects baby and mother

The cells, hormones and antibodies in breastmilk may protect babies from illness. This protection is unique and changes to meet your baby’s needs. And breastfeeding can help you, too, by lowering your risk of type 2 diabetes, certain types of breast cancer and ovarian cancer. Breastfeeding may also help you lose pregnancy weight.

Learning to breastfeeding takes time, practice and patience. A good latch is important for your baby to breastfeed correctly and for your comfort. During the early days of breastfeeding, it can take time for your baby to latch on well.

You can tell whether your baby is getting plenty of milk. He or she will be mostly content and will gain weight steadily after the first week of age. If you worry that your baby is not getting enough milk, talk to your baby’s doctor.

You can take certain medicines while breastfeeding — but not all. Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist about medicines you are using and ask before you start using new medicines. This includes prescription and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements.

You can still breastfeed even after you return to work or school. Planning ahead for your return to work can help ease the transition. Talk with your employer about your options.

Resources for you
- The Arizona Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program offers food, nutrition counseling and access to health services for women, infants and children. Breastfeeding mothers may receive peer counselor support, an enhanced food package, breast pumps and other supplies. Call WIC at 1-800-252-5942 to see if you qualify.
- You can call the Arizona Department of Health Services Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-800-833-4642, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Source: “Your Guide to Breastfeeding” from the CDC Office of Women’s Health

HIV and pregnancy: Why testing matters

Are you pregnant? Be sure to get tested for HIV. That’s the virus that causes AIDS.

A woman who has HIV can pass the virus on to her child. This can happen while she is pregnant. It can also happen when she is giving birth.

If a woman knows she is infected, she can take steps to keep her baby — and herself — well. Special medicines can help her avoid passing the virus to the baby.

These medicines work best if you start them early. But if you can’t, they can still help if used before labor begins and the baby is born.

Testing is encouraged for all pregnant women, even those who don’t think they have HIV. People who have HIV may not have any symptoms for years at a time.

Learning your HIV status will help ensure you and your baby are healthy. Ask your doctor about how to get tested. If you test positive for any sexually transmitted infection or HIV, your doctor can give you medication and help you find counseling. Testing, medication and counseling are provided at no cost to you.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Suicide: How to get help and help others

The change of seasons during springtime can stir up a range of emotions. It can be a time of renewed energy as the weather becomes warmer and we begin to spend more time outside. With the pandemic restricting the ability to connect with friends and family, many people feel lonely. We have been living in times of uncertainty, financial strain, increased duties, health concerns and more. But it’s important to know that you’re not alone.

Here are some helpful tips from SAMHSA and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on how to help yourself, your friends and family. We encourage you to check in with five friends or family members after reading this article. You can make a difference and #BeThe1To reach out.

Help for you
Talking with someone about your thoughts and feelings can save your life. There are steps you can take to keep yourself safe through a crisis. Call or connect online with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to get support. They can help you:
• Find a therapist/support group
• Build and use a support network
• Make a safety plan

Help for someone you know
Learn how to recognize the warning signs when someone’s at risk — and what you can do to help. If you believe someone may be in danger of suicide:
• Call 911, if danger for self-harm seems likely.
• Ask them if they are thinking about killing themselves. This will not put the idea into their head or make it more likely that they will attempt suicide.
• Listen without judging and show you care.
• Stay with the person or make sure the person is in a private, secure place with another caring person until you can get further help.
• Remove any objects that could be used in a suicide attempt.

Learn more about action steps you can take. You can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org. Talk to their professionals and follow their guidance.

For a behavioral health crisis
Mercy Care DCS CHP members can call the Behavioral Health Crisis Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
• Maricopa County: 602-222-9444
• Pima and Pinal counties: 1-866-495-6735
• Gila County: 1-877-756-4090
• All Arizona: 1-888-404-5530

Crisis Line staff can help:
• Meet you in the community
• Take you somewhere safe
• Help you identify resources for care
• Help you arrange counseling
• Provide options for dealing with other urgent situations

Always call 911 in life-threatening situations.

If you need someone to talk to
Call the Warm Line: 602-347-1100. This support line is operated by credentialed peer support specialists. It’s available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Source: www.samhsa.gov/suicide
Quitting tobacco

Quitting tobacco is one of the best things that you can do for your health. If you get medication and coaching, you can double your chance for successfully quitting tobacco. You can get help or coaching through group education, over the phone and by text messaging. You can get medication from your doctor. Your doctor can also refer you to the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) for coaching and resources to help quit tobacco. You do not need a referral to the ASHLine. The ASHLine also offers information to help protect you and your loved ones from secondhand smoke. Many people have quit smoking and stopped tobacco use through programs offered by the ASHLine. If you want more information to help you or someone you know quit tobacco, you have choices. You can:

1. Call Mercy Care Member Services at 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879 (TTY/TDD 711).

2. If you are part of Mercy Care’s Care Management program, talk to your case manager.

3. Talk to a doctor.

4. Call the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) directly at 1-800-556-6222 or visit www.ashline.org.

For more information on quitting tobacco, go to Tobacco Free Arizona at www.azdhs.gov/prevention/tobacco-chronic-disease/tobacco-free-az/index.php. Tobacco Free Arizona is a program to help Arizonans know the risks of tobacco use and resources for quitting.

Language and interpretation services

Mercy Care DCS CHP can help you get a telephone or sign language interpreter for the child’s health care visits at no cost to you. If you need help in your language or if you are deaf or have difficulty hearing, call Member Services for an interpreter at 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879 (TTY/TDD 711).
Nondiscrimination Notice

Mercy Care DCS CHP complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Mercy Care DCS CHP does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Mercy Care DCS CHP:

• Provides no-cost aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  o Qualified sign language interpreters
  o Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

• Provides no-cost language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  o Qualified interpreters
  o Information written in other languages

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on the member's ID card or 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).

If you believe that Mercy Care DCS CHP has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with our Civil Rights Coordinator at:

Address: Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator
4500 East Cotton Center Boulevard
Phoenix, AZ 85040
Telephone: 1-888-234-7358 (TTY 711)
Email: MedicaidCRCoordinator@mercycareaz.org

You can file a grievance in person or by mail or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD).

MC-DCS-CHP-1449
Multi-language Interpreter Services

ENGLISH: ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).

SPANISH: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).


CHINESE: 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的ID卡背面的電話號碼或 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)。


KOREAN: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 귀하의 ID 카드 뒷면에 있는 번호로나 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) 번으로 연락해 주십시오.


JAPANESE: 注意事項:日本語をお話になる方は、無料で言語サポートのサービスをご利用いただけます。IDカード裏面の電話番号、または1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)までご連絡ください。

PERSIAN: اگر به زبان فارسی صحبت می‌کنید، به صورت رایگان می‌توانید به خدمات کمک زبانی دسترسی داشته باشید. با شماره درجه شده در پشت کارت شناسایی یا با شماره 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) تماس بگیرید.

SYRIAC: ملاحظه: 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)


SOMALI: FEERIGNAAN: Haddii aad ka hadasho, adeegyada gargararka lucadda, oo bilaash ah, ayaad heli kartaa. Wac lambarka ku qoran dhabarka dambe ee kaarkaaga aqoonsiga ama 1-800-385-4104 (Kuwa Maqalka ku Adag 711).

THAI: ข้อความระบุว่า: ถ้าคุณพูดภาษาไทย คุณสามารถใช้บริการช่วยเหลือทางภาษาได้ฟรี โดยติดต่อหมายเลขที่อยู่ด้านหลังบัตร ID ของคุณ หรือหมายเลข 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) 86.03.322.1-AZ.